DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 405 836 IR 018 276

AUTHOR Wagner, Robin; Breighner, Kim
TITLE Faculty as Partners: A Four Tiered Training Approach to the Web.
PUB DATE 96
NOTE 6p.; In: Association of Small Computer Users in Education (ASCUE) Summer Conference Proceedings (29th, North Myrtle Beach, SC, June 9-13, 1996); see IR 018 247.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Computer Literacy; *Faculty Development; Higher Education; Information Services; *Information Skills; *Information Technology; Librarians; *Partnerships in Education; Resource Staff; Student Role; *Teamwork; Training; Workshops
IDENTIFIERS *Gettysburg College PA; Question Answering; *Technology Utilization

ABSTRACT

The Training Team of the Information Resources unit at Gettysburg College (Pennsylvania) is not only responsible for answering faculty members' technology questions, but also charged with instructing the entire community in the basics of using a wide variety of applications. The Training Team is a combination of software specialists and bibliographic instruction librarians. With the idea of forming stronger faculty partnerships, a menu of training possibilities was put together, with four different options for delivery time and timespan. The goal in all cases is to improve the technology skills of the faculty so that they become secure in requiring/teaching basic information technology skills. The other agenda is to forge partnerships with student trainers. Student case workers have been key in the continued success of the operation. The syllabus for a sample 2-day training workshop on Netscape is included. (AEF)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

Faculty as Partners: a Four Tiered Training Approach to the Web

ED 405 836

Robin Wagner
Information Resources
Gettysburg College
300 N. Washington St.
Gettysburg, PA 17325
717-337-7030
rowagner@gettysburg.edu

Kim Breighner
Information Resources
Gettysburg College
300 N. Washington St.
Gettysburg, PA 17325
717-337-6932
kbreighn@gettysburg.edu

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

The phone rings and it's a faculty member. " I'd like to add a technology component to my freshman seminar. I think it's just as important for students to develop good technical skills their freshman year as it is to have an intensive research and writing experience."

Later the same day: "Who can teach Quattro Pro over there? I want my students to know how to do a project using this application."

The list goes on. More calls. More questions.

"What is this Web thing? Is this something I should know something about?"

" I'm thinking of having my students do oral histories. Can they do it on the web? Can we put in pictures of the people they interview? How about sound? I'd love to hear the actual voices."

" I want my students to use census data to do their end-of-the-semester sociology project. We're not a government documents depository, but you can find the same stuff on the Web, can't you?"

"I want my students to submit their papers by e-mail, but I don't want to take class time teaching them how to do this."

"Do you have a handout I can give my students on how to use Netscape and html?"

" I want my students to learn how to find and search the Edgar files so they can have access to company 10K and 9K reports. Can you come over this week?"

"I would like to have my students use technology in some way for my Japanese culture class, any ideas?"

"I heard there are all kinds of great sources in Spanish for current events on the Web. How can I have my students tap into this?"

"My freshmen are all astute computer users but my juniors and seniors don't have a clue. Do you ever run seminars just for upperclassmen to get them up to speed?"

These are but a few samples—all true—of a week's worth (sometimes a day's) of typical faculty requests for training and assistance. At Gettysburg College, the Training Team of Information Resources is not only responsible for working with faculty in this way but also charged with teaching the nuts and bolts of using a wide variety of applications (right down to how do I turn on my computer) to the entire user community. On a typical day this can run from teaching the staff of the President's office how to use a calendar program, training the dining hall staff on Wordperfect and running a seminar for seniors on making a homepage. Our clientele is varied and we have many demands, from administrative offices, staff, and students. The faculty requests, however, are often the most complex because they involve requests where there is often not a quick answer.

IR018974

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
C.P. Singer
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

They are requests for partnering, for teaching, for turning up new resources and helping with the design of course assignments. They involve the most in terms of time, creativity and planning. And these requests are growing rapidly—too fast. Such requests have forced us to examine training and investigate new models for dealing with this most sophisticated level of question.

As many of you who are in support functions on your campuses are aware, the demand for training and service is not new. We have all seen this growth as proportional to the explosion of resources available in a networked fashion. This runs the gamut from files on the internet to machine-readable versions of once traditional printed indexes of bibliographic material. The demand, coupled with the explosion of possibilities—and interest on the part of our teaching faculty—has begged for new models of teaching and training, and that is what we intend to explore with you today.

At Gettysburg College we are a training staff of three on a campus with 2200 students, 267 faculty, and 29 academic departments. Our network runs throughout the campus and off and connects dorm rooms, fraternities, interest housing, faculty offices, and administrative facilities. We've seen our requests grow enormously in the last year. In addition we're also operating in a somewhat different information resources configuration than what would be considered traditional on most campuses. Two years ago Computing Services (which already encompassed both Academic and Administrative Computing) and Library Services merged to form a new unit—Information Resources. This meant not only blending the two organizations on paper but a physical merger—developing a whole new organization centered around process-based, self-managed teams.

In its present structure, Information Resources is made up of five teams. The team that deals with user education is the Training Team, a combination of software specialists from the old computing structure and bibliographic instruction librarians from the old library structure. Both computer specialists and librarians have had to begin trying on the hat (if not wearing another hat) of colleagues. For instance, as a librarian I have been called upon to teach students to "meet their mac," learn the ins and outs of Wordperfect, format a document, do footnotes, navigate the net and create html documents. My colleague here today, whose anchor was in computing before our merge, has had to bone up in psychology sources when a faculty member teaching Deviance wanted her to help their class create a web page and "oh, by the way, can you teach them to use Psych Abstracts, Social Sciences index, and anything else you think would be a good research tool for their papers." She's had to go and talk with faculty in biology and chemistry about online access to databases most useful in their disciplines. So you see, at the same time that we're running left and right to fulfill needs, we're also having to learn new roles and explore the contents of an unfamiliar toolbox, so to speak.

Add to this the upgrade of all faculty computers (we support both Mac and PC in about equal numbers) in the last year and we had a ready pool of virtual novices, anxious to test the power of their new machine and make good on the president's challenge to make significant inroads toward integrating technology in the curriculum. Now they had the machine to do it!

As I suggested a moment ago, such a palate requires a new model for providing service and that is where we began to restructure the way we do training—to think about alliances and

partnerships which would extend our numbers outside the formal Information Resources structure. One of many ideas we tested this last year was to form stronger faculty partnerships, in a sense, training the faculty to be our trainers, and making them capable enough to handle what we'd call basic training on their own. We did this through a four option menu of training possibilities which included:

-two day intensive seminars generally offered during breaks
-one day blitz workshops offered primarily over breaks or on Fridays
-weekly, 90 minute mini courses offered from 4-5:30 which basically took the components of the two day workshop and one day blitzes and spread the content out in smaller, digestible bits
-and one-on-one training opportunities with clinic support

Our end goal in all cases is to improve the skills of our "first line trainers," the faculty; to up the comfort level so that the faculty feel secure in requiring/teaching basic information technology skills. We are, of course, always willing to come in and do the original demonstration. What it has helped with, primarily, isn't the first contact. We still feel is very important to have IR people are out in the classrooms. Where it has helped us, (and this has become increasingly clear throughout this very experimental year) is in the area of follow up and continued support. Where it lightens the load is in the ongoing support required to not just introduce the technology but work with it all semester long. This is the role we see our faculty assuming—working with their students using the computer to search the web, logging into the online catalog, or searching one of the many information databases from their offices. We teach them the basic navigation now but after one or two intensive sessions, often tailored to their specific assignments, we find our faculty calling less about subject-specific internet related questions and more apt to go out and hunt for resources themselves. Moreover, they often encourage others in their department to become "computer literate" and teach some of those basic navigation skills for us!

Our other agenda is to forge partnerships not only between faculty and IR staff but also with student trainers. We oversee a group of student trainers who staff our drop-in clinic and make themselves available to conduct training for individual students or small groups of students on all of the above mentioned "tools of the trade". Student clinic workers also serve as liaison (we call them student caseworkers) to all of the classes that the Training Team staff assists in. This gives the faculty member and the students in each class not just one contact but two for planning, training, and follow-up help and information purposes.

We have conducted intensive seminars in the use of the web, focussing on the web as both a powerful searching tool and a vehicle for distributing one's own information. To demonstrate the latter point, we use a Training homepage to organize and make available documents from the workshop and actual training materials for our faculty "students" to consult, long after the actual training session ends. We find in classes that we can ask faculty to familiarize themselves with our training pages and at the same time they are learning how to use the web as a tool. They can click on "source" and see the markup tags that created the document—a precursor to what we'll teach them. We can have them navigate around our training pages and by pointing and clicking see how they might create such an electronic document themselves. As trainers, we like the easy update capabilities of having your handouts available in this format. Plus we save trees in the process. You

can access our training pages at the following address:

http://www.gettysburg.edu/~kbreighn/trainteam.html.

These training materials are central to the two day workshop. The syllabus for one such 2-day workshop on Netscape follows:

Day 1
9:00-10:00
Introduction: An overview of basic Web concepts including home pages, links, locations, definitions and hands-on practice with Netscape, our most popular web browser. This introductory session will include demonstrations on exploring the worldwide web, instruction on how to "surf" efficiently and offer strategies for recording the locations of interesting sites.

10-10:15
Break

10:15-12:00
Integrating the Web into the Curriculum: Professors Fender, Arterberry, and Hofman will demonstrate successful projects involving their students and discuss class assignments with Web technology as the centerpiece.

12-1:15
Lunch.

1:15-5:00
Creating Web Documents—The Basics: Begin designing a homepage in this session. Simple instruction offered in hypertext markup language (html) which will show you the basics of creating and tagging documents. Lab and training staff will be available until 5:00 p.m. to assist in construction of individual homepages or further exploration of sources on the Worldwide Web.

Day 2

9-9:15
Review and Questions

9:30-12
Creating Web Documents—Advanced features: Instruction on making links, using color, patterns, scanning pictures and photographs and incorporating other graphic features into your html documents.

12:00-1:00
Lunch.

1:00-5:00
Individual Project Consultations

Open period for creating links, exploring graphic capabilities and discussing individual curriculum ideas. Staff and lab available until 5:00 p.m.

As mentioned earlier, we have also conducted one-day seminars in which we covered the same information in a much more condensed fashion for those people who preferred that method. We have also offered a more "spread out" version, taking this basic course, and dividing it into digestible 1 1/2 hour sessions offered at 4:30. We have discovered that this is a time which suits many of our faculty who don't have the time to devote a day to such an enterprise. With this format we can give assignments and the "students" have lots of play time in between. When we teach the series of three on Netscape, for instance, a typical curriculum would be: First session--What is the web and how do you navigate it. We make stops in our "online" dining hall (which actually lets you see not just the menus but the food that day and the length of the lines!), cruise through our admissions materials and then venture on out on the web, taking requests from the class for things to search using one of the engines. Session two is billed as an opportunity to create one's own homepage, no matter how primitive. The final session teaches use of color, design, layout, tables and more advanced tools to enrich the look and utility of the page. We take them to use the scanner and urge them to bring something graphic to incorporate in their work.

For those who like a handy set of directions close by we have short brochures in a trifold which we distribute. These sessions on Netscape have been so successful that we have introduced a new series of mini-workshops dealing with specific applications. Follow-up is key and to date we haven't found a good method of evaluation. We do solicit feedback via e-mail and ask for suggestions for other courses. Many of the sessions we teach now are an outgrowth of these early Netscape offerings. We find that offering a choice of presentation and format we can cater to a variety of learning styles. Some people want to learn on their own. They can "tune in" to our Web pages online. Others like the intensive approach. All our day workshops are for them. Some like the comraderie that a two day workshop (meals included) offers—sharing suffering amongst colleagues. Others have extremely busy schedules and would like things in measured doses. Our support with student caseworkers makes it all possible when we go from the actual presentation to the ongoing support. These student workers have been key in the continued success of the operation. And finally, we've seen a tremendous increase in faculty teaching each other, or at the very least, engendering enthusiasm amongst colleagues to provide a technological component—and helping their colleagues on the subject-specific side of things. In fact, as you might have observed from above, some of our best faculty "students" volunteer to share their stories at our workshops.

As we said before, our end goal in all cases is to improve the skills of our "first line trainers," the faculty, to up the comfort level so that the faculty feel secure in requiring/teaching basic information technology skills to their students. Our "repeat customers" are shining examples of this—the faculty members that have mastered these skills, gotten their students involved in projects in their classes using these new skills, and also teaching their colleagues these same skills so that they then keep the ball rolling. To view some of the more interesting projects that have come about as a result, check out http://www.gettysburg.edu/newproj.html on the Net.